

Senior Service College Fellowship Fellows Visit Army Training Centers

Capital and Northeast (CNE) Senior Service College Fellowship (SSCF) fellows from Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), Md., as well as DAU professors **Rick Cozby**, **Bill Gilbert**, **Chris Manning**, **Deirdre Sumpter**, **Medhat Abuhantash**, **Tony Subrizi**, **Corde Lane**, and **Sharon Meirose**, and CNE SSCF Director **Jim Oman** visited the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, La., from Nov. 16 to 18, 2009, and the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, Calif., from Nov. 18 to 19, 2009.

The visits to the Army's premier training facilities provided firsthand, eyes-on exposure to the latest technological advances in testing, training, and end-user application in a stressful environment that replicates the current operating environment. It also allowed fellows to observe the vital role that the JRTC and NTC play in preparing individuals, leaders, and units for combat deployments; observe leaders demonstrate leadership competencies of directing people and leading change to obtain results; and gain a deeper understanding of the modular, brigade-based force, its capabilities, and how it meets the requirements of the geographic combatant commanders.

At the JRTC Operations Group, the fellows received a command brief from the operations officer that provided rotational objectives and training methodology highlighting pre-rotational training, engagement training, situational training exercises, theater-based live-fire training, command post exercises, and force-on-force exercises. The briefing also addressed how the current operating environment is replicated at the training center with dynamic battlefield effects such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle-borne IEDs, suicide bombers, indirect fires, and rocket-propelled grenades. When the effects are combined with civilians, non-governmental organizations, foreign security forces, insurgents, foreign fighters, and militia, they make the battlefield come to life.

The fellows were also given a description of the most prevalent observations and trends occurring during the rotational unit's mission rehearsal exercise, and were also told about the emerging concept of embedded Company Intelligence Support Teams, along with their collective development, equipping, and employment. The fellow's time with the Operations Group was punctuated with a visit to the maneuver box where they visited training sites that realistically replicated a village

and a forward operating base that could be found in a multitude of locations throughout the current operating environment. Lastly, the fellows were given an in-depth command Briefing by the JRTC and Fort Polk Chief of Staff Col. Rick Bloss.

After traveling to Fort Irwin, the fellows were welcomed by the NTC Chief of Staff Col. Joseph Wawro, who provided them with a rundown of the NTC and Fort Irwin, specifically addressing their training methodology; the preparation of units for combat; the development of scenarios reflective of the current operating environment; the development of adaptive, agile leaders; the forging of partnerships; and ongoing initiatives. The fellows toured the Division Tactical Operations Center, where they received a rotational in-brief that provided them with an overview of the ongoing mission rehearsal exercise focusing on force-on-force play.

Next, the fellows received a terrorist explosive network brief that described how IEDs are constructed and employed. Afterward, SSCF fellow Corde Lane playing the role of a triggerman, demonstrating the relative ease of using an IED against a HMMWV when he effectively detonated a series of faux devices. Prior to transiting to the maneuver box, the fellows received a series of highly

informative briefings on terrorist explosive networks, robotics/IED exploitation, and biometrics from members of the Joint IED Defeat Organization at the Army Center of Excellence Detachment.

The presentations provided context and set the stage for the Fellows visit to the training site village of Medina Jabal. At the time of the visit, the village was occupied with a "fully engaged civilian population," foreign security forces, active insurgents, and criminal elements all of which when combined provided an extremely complex background reflective of the current operating environment. While there, the fellows gained a deeper appreciation for the complicated nature of the modern battlefield as they observed the rotational unit interact with the villagers and national governmental forces and respond to the numerous threats generated by the local insurgents.

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